Doubutsu no Oishasan

by SASAKI Noriko

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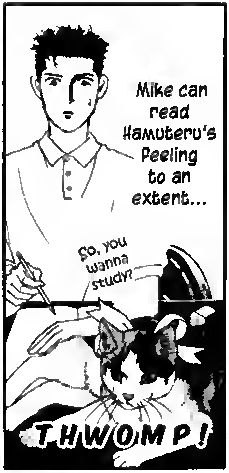
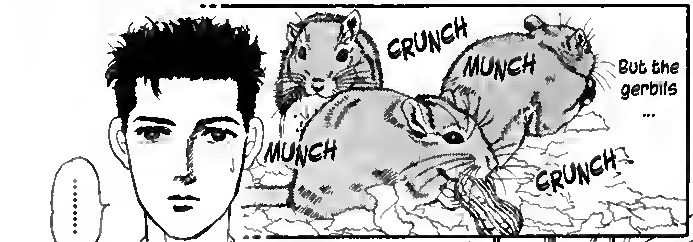
動物のお医者さん

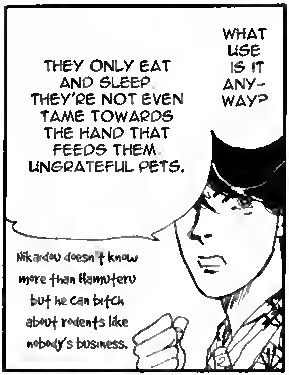
Even Hiyo reacts to Hamuteru.
ON
Hurry up or I'll kick you
Food for me?
Hn!
He only has two reactions.

While Chobi knows her owner pretty well.
Ok - later, then
Play with me?


Mike can read Hamuteru's feeling to an extent...
Go, you wanna study?
THWOMP!


CRUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH
CRUNCH
But the gerbils ...
.....

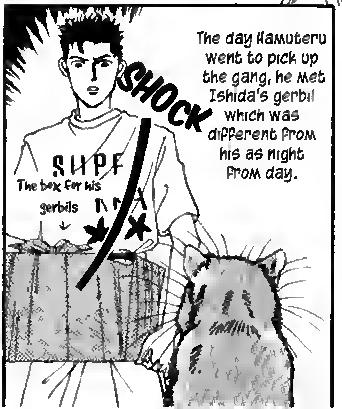
Without a universal language, it's impossible for humans and animals to understand each other perfectly.
WHY THE SAD FACE NOW?
THEY'VE NEVER SEEN YOU AS ANYTHING BUT AN AUTOMATIC FOOD DISPENSER.
AWE?


WHAT USE IS IT ANY-WAY?
THEY ONLY EAT AND SLEEP THEY'RE NOT EVEN TAME TOWARDS THE HAND THAT FEEDS THEM. UNGRATEFUL PETS.
Nikaidou doesn't know more than Hamuteru but he can bitch about rodents like nobody's business.

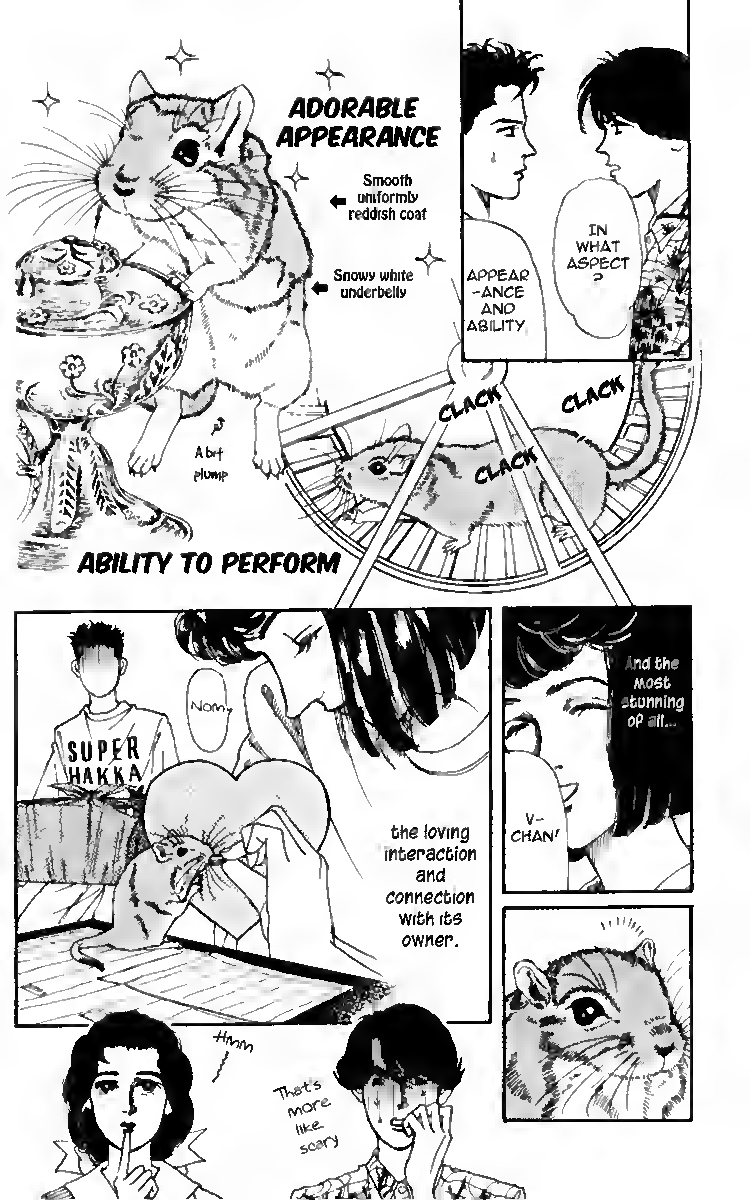
IF he had King Solomon's Ring...
Hamuteru would ask the gerbils what they think about all day.
King Solomon, (not this guy) had an enchanted ring which gave him the power to communicate with the animals.

Hamuteru was in shock.
I DOUBT THAT...

Really..?
A Nobel Prize winner.
Dr Konrad Lorenz had it too.

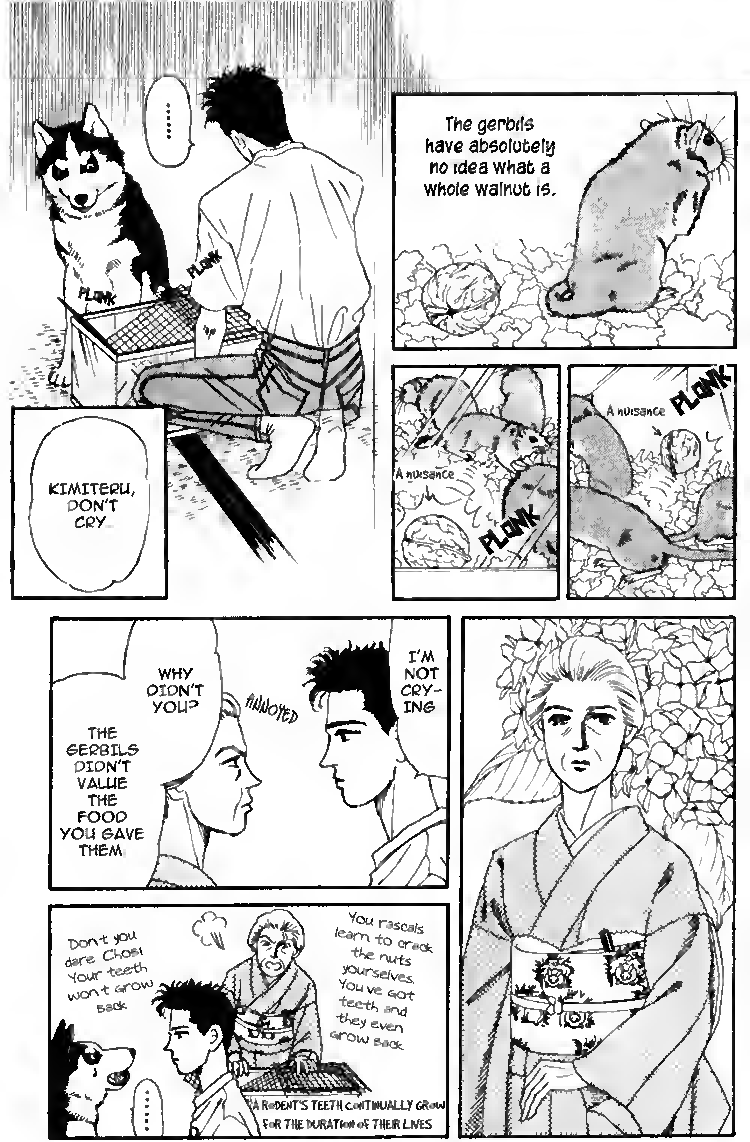

SHOCK
SUPE
The box for his gerbils
The day Hamuteru went to pick up the gang, he Met Ishida's gerbil which was different from his as night from day.

Grandma was not an option. She would have demanded high compensations, such as 100 back rubs.
During his time at the Riding Club, Hamuteru asked a classmate to look after his gerbils.
NO PROBLEM I'LL KEEP THEM WITH MY GERBIL AT HOME


ADORABLE APPEARANCE
Smooth uniformly reddish coat
Snowy white underbelly
A bit plump
APPEAR-ANCE AND ABILITY
IN WHAT ASPECT?
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
ABILITY TO PERFORM
SUPER HAKKA
Nom.
the loving interaction and connection with its owner.
And the most stunning of all...
V-CHAN!
Hmm
That's more like scary

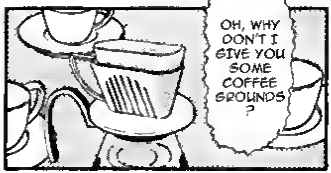
NI
SHI
NE
Itamuberu decided to research gerbils during the remainder of his summer break.
However, the animal hospital wasn't closed so he had to go to school everyday.
Don't we have anything better to do?
I USED TO THINK GERBILS WERE NOTHING BUT A CUTE FACE SO I NEVER EXPECTED MORE.
BUT THEY MAY HAVE MORE DEPTH THAN I THOUGHT
MAYBE I NEED TO GET THEM OUT OF THE CAGE SOMETIMES
But once he put them on the table,
And try to get away.
Run,
RUN
RUN
They would jump,
JUMP
JUMP

They ended up super dirty from hiding in nooks and crannies.
All ten were the same
IT'S NOT LIKE I INVEST MYSELF ENOUGH TO KNOW EACH OF THE TEN GERBILS EITHER
SO I DON'T EXPECT THEM TO ACT GRATEFUL TO ME
You should fatten them up, Hamuteru
That's why it can't jump off the table like your gerbils
MAYBE ISHIDA'S GERBIL IS JUST TOO FAT TO MOVE SO IT APPEARS TAME
OH?
CRACK
Once the nut is cracked, they then eat the inside.
I KNEW IT THEY DON'T RECOGNIZE THE FOOD WHEN PRESENTED WITH THE WHOLE NUT
Hamuteru regrouped and decided to research their intelligence.


.....
PLONK
PLONK
KIMITERU, DON'T CRY
The gerbils have absolutely no idea what a whole walnut is.
A nuisance
PLONK
A nuisance
PLONK
I'M NOT CRY-ING
ANNOYED
WHY DIDN'T YOU?
THE GERBILS DIDN'T VALUE THE FOOD YOU GAVE THEM
Don't you dare, Chori. Your teeth won't grow back.
You rascals learn to crack the nuts yourselves. You've got teeth, and they even grow back.
.....
A RODENT'S TEETH CONTINUALLY GROW FOR THE DURATION OF THEIR LIVES

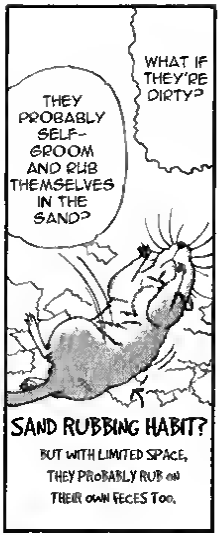
THAT'S RIGHT. AFTER THAT THEY WILL THINK THEIR WHOLE WORLD CONSISTS OF ONLY YOU, KIMITERU.
POSSIBLY. THEY PROBABLY CARE MORE ABOUT THEIR OWN KIND THAN ABOUT HUMANS.
MAYBE THE REASON OUR GERBILS AREN'T TAME IS BECAUSE WE RAISE THEM IN A PACK.
while Ishida only raises one.
But Hamuteru doesn't want to go that far.
THAT MEANS IT ISN'T ENTIRELY HOPELESS IF WE KEEP EACH OF THEM IN SEPARATE BOXES.
ISHIDA GOT THAT GERBIL FROM ME.
WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL GERBIL
IT SOUNDS MORE LIKE GENETICS. MAYBE THAT GERBIL'S ANCESTORS WERE THE WORLD CHAMPION GERBILS OR SOMETHING.
Hamuteru more or less gave up on taming the gerbils. But he's still hung up on Ishida's gerbil's shiny coat.
WHAT ABOUT YOURS?
ISHIDA'S GERBIL'S UNDERBELLY FUR IS SNOWY WHITE
Oh, a commoner after all.

MAYBE ISHIDA'S GERBIL IS JUST TOO WELL-FED AND CARED FOR?
YEAH, I SAW IT SLEEPS IN COTTON BEDDING.
You think so ?
THEN IT'S YOUR GERBILS THAT MEET THE STANDARDS, HAMUTERU
GERBILS ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE GERBIL COLOR
Eew, the most nauseating color of all
IT'S GERBIL COLOR
Gerbils, once known simply as "desert rats", sometimes never see a body of water as long as they live.
GERBILS ARE DESERT ANIMALS
Their bodies don't need much water to survive.
And they only pee a little
PIECES OF TISSUE PAPERS ROLLS, TISSUE BOXES, FILM BOXES THE GERBILS SHRED THEM
WHAT ABOUT YOURS ?
Can be used as a blanket when cold.
THAT'S TRUE...
OR ISHIDA BATHES HER GERBIL LIKE A HOUSE CAT OR DOG?
Not that I bathe Fukuchan



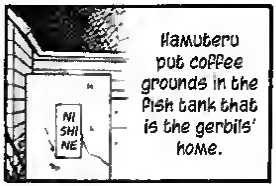
Hamuteru never lets them have any sand. He's learned his lesson.

THEY SEEMED TO BE THRILLED.



SAND RUBBING HABIT?

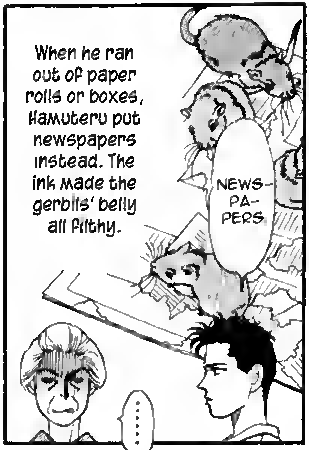
BUT WITH LIMITED SPACE, THEY PROBABLY RUB on THEIR OWN FECES TOO.



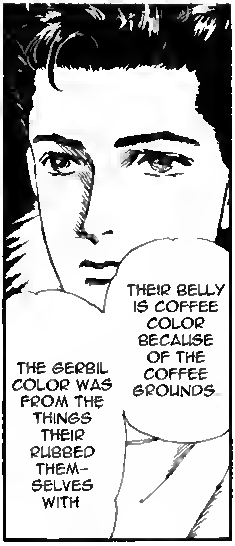
Hamuteru put coffee grounds in the fish tank that is the gerbils' home.

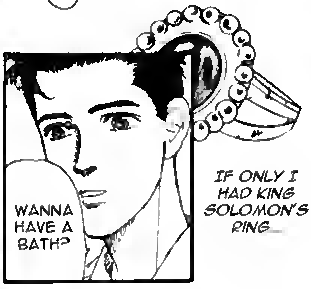
It turns their underbelly fur to coffee color.

The mystery of snowy-white underbelly is finally solved.


When he ran out of paper rolls or boxes, Hamuteru put newspapers instead. The ink made the gerbils' belly all filthy.
NEWS-PA-PERS
.....

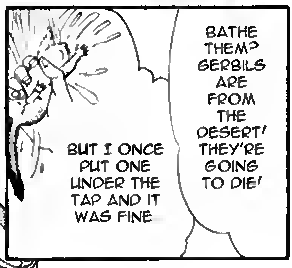
AND WHAT WAS THAT?


THEIR BELLY IS COFFEE COLOR BECAUSE OF THE COFFEE GROUNDS
THE GERBIL COLOR WAS FROM THE THINGS THEIR RUBBED THEM-SELVES WITH

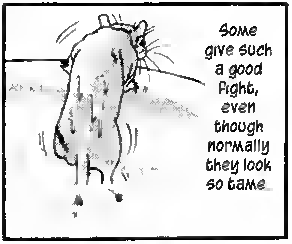

WANNA HAVE A BATH?
IF ONLY I HAD KING SOLOMON'S RING...

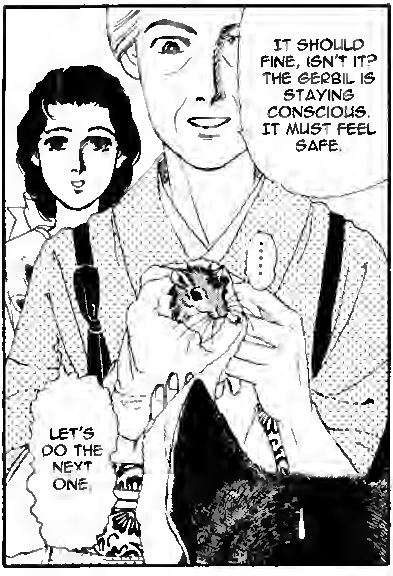
Public Health Department
CAN SOAP WATER CLEAN INK AND COFFEE?
WHAT WILL YOU DO?

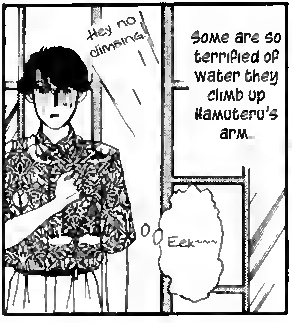
NUH-UH

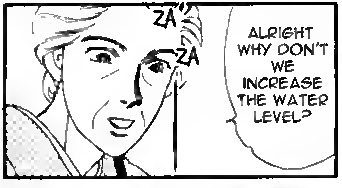

BUT I ONCE PUT ONE UNDER THE TAP AND IT WAS FINE
BATHE THEM? GERBILS ARE FROM THE DESERT! THEY'RE GOING TO DIE!

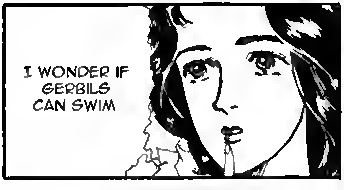
LET'S TRY THE YOUNGEST AND TOUGHEST-LOOKING FIRST.
GOOD THING I CAN'T UNDER-STAND THEM.
Even though he isn't so sure, Hamuteru bathe the gerbils.
First, soak it in warm water.
SCRAMBLE
Rinse.
DREN
CHED
At this point, the struggle has stopped completely.
Shampoo.
SCRAMBLE

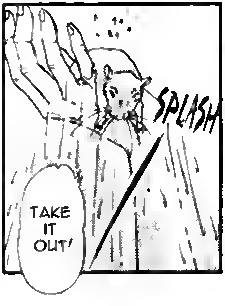

Some give such a good fight, even though normally they look so tame.

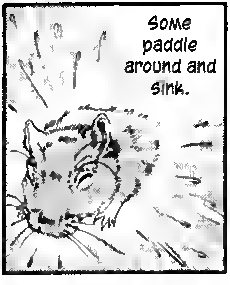

IT SHOULD FINE, ISN'T IT? THE GERBIL IS STAYING CONSCIOUS. IT MUST FEEL SAFE.
LET'S DO THE NEXT ONE.


Hey no climbing!
Some are so terrified of water they climb up Hamuteru's arm.
Eek~~~

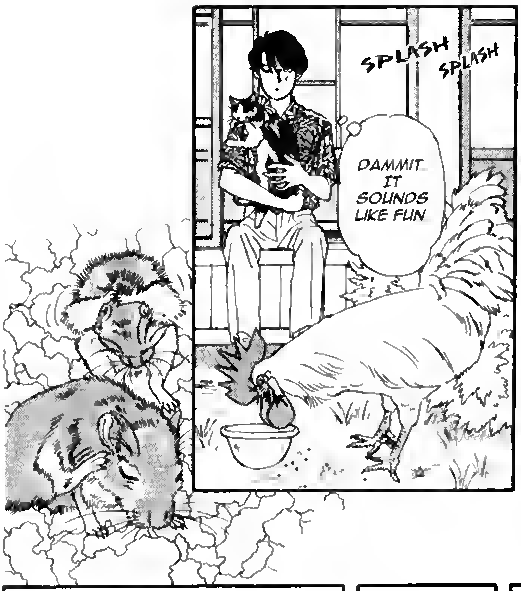

ZA
ZA
ALRIGHT WHY DON'T WE INCREASE THE WATER LEVEL?


I WONDER IF GERBILS CAN SWIM

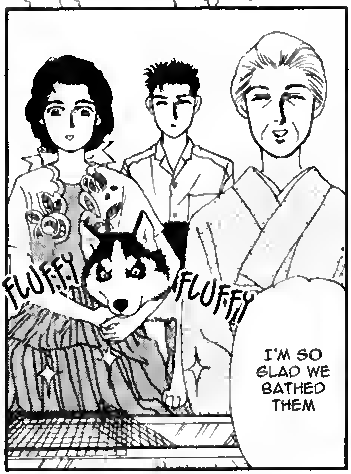

SPLASH
TAKE IT OUT!


Some paddle around and sink.

Some can swim really fast.

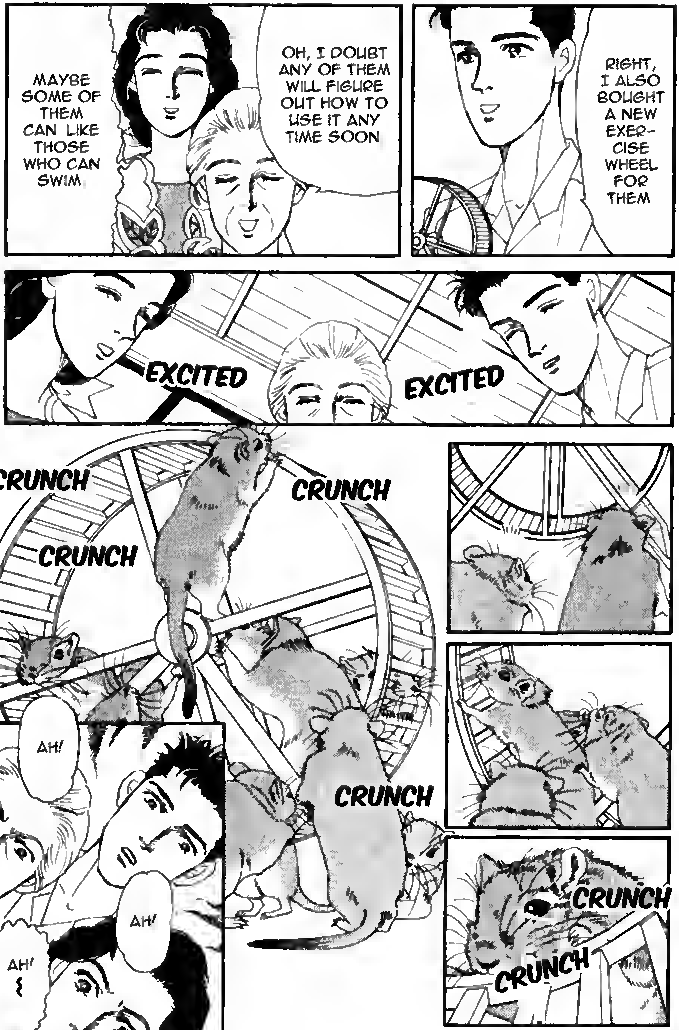


Because of the bath, they learned that the gerbils do have personalities.



Soon they're fully dry and fluffy.

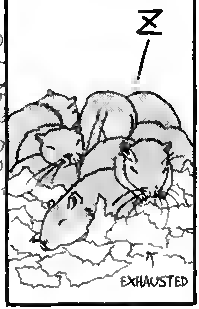
It's uncertain whether the gerbils know they were bathed because they were dirty. All ten of them keep grooming themselves afterward.


MAYBE SOME OF THEM CAN LIKE THOSE WHO CAN SWIM
OH, I DOUBT ANY OF THEM WILL FIGURE OUT HOW TO USE IT ANY TIME SOON
RIGHT, I ALSO BOUGHT A NEW EXER-CISE WHEEL FOR THEM
EXCITED
EXCITED
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
AH!
AH!
AH!

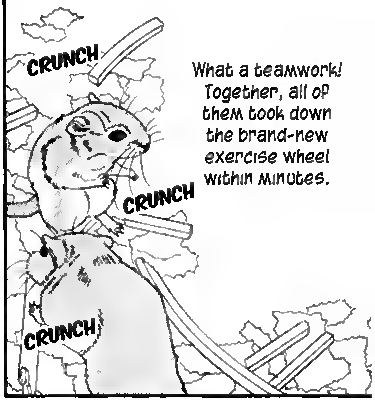
MIKADOU COULDN'T STAND WATCHING THE GERBILS BEING BATHED AND RESORTED TO BATHING CHORI.

Hamuteru gave up.

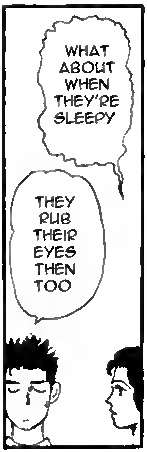
He will try to seek out their cuteness as a pack instead.

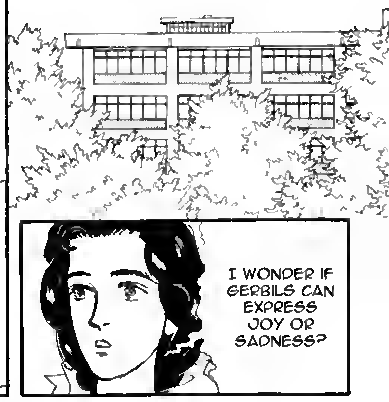


EXHAUSTED

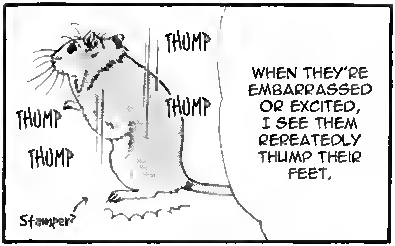


What a teamwork! Together, all of them took down the brand-new exercise wheel within minutes.





Maybe he's acquired a bit of King Solomon's Ring.
I CAN UNDERSTAND CHOBI QUITE WELL.


THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
WHEN THEY'RE EMBARRASSED OR EXCITED, I SEE THEM REPEATEDLY THUMP THEIR FEET.
Stamper?

After that, Hamuteru continued with his observations and research. Now he's beginning to be able to read them.
Can gerbils really have advanced emotions like embarrassment?

ALL DONE
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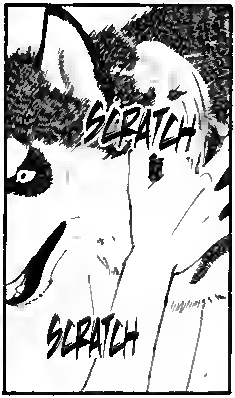
SCRATCH
SCRATCH

WHAT'S UP, CHOBI? YOU ITCHY?

Turns out, Hamuteru doesn't know Chobi as well as he thought.

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